



United States  
of America

# Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 117<sup>th</sup> CONGRESS, SECOND SESSION

Vol. 168

WASHINGTON, THURSDAY, MARCH 3, 2022

No. 39

## Senate

### LEGISLATIVE SESSION

#### POSTAL SERVICE REFORM ACT OF 2022—Resumed

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of H.R. 3076, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 3076) to provide stability to and enhance the services of the United States Postal Service, and for other purposes.

#### Pending:

Schumer (for Peters) amendment No. 4955, to modify the deadline for the initial report on the operations and financial condition of the United States Postal Service.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. OSSOFF). The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The majority leader is recognized.

#### CORONAVIRUS

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. President, as spring begins, daily new cases of COVID-19 have dramatically decreased since the height of Omicron. Hospitalizations, thank God, have steadily declined. Across the country, Americans are able to remove their masks as the spread of disease seems to be lessening. Crucially, schools are open, and we need to do everything we can in our power to make sure they stay open.

All of these signs point in a positive direction. The country is turning the corner on the COVID pandemic. We are in a new moment of the fight.

But we also are at a crossroads. Either we act now to secure the progress

we have made, or we risk backsliding if another contagious variant emerges in the fall and winter. Just as we cannot allow COVID to rule our lives, neither can we fall into a false sense of complacency.

That is why the White House has requested that Congress include \$22.5 billion in additional COVID relief funding in the upcoming spending bill, and Congress should follow through with this request over the coming days. If not, we risk sliding back if another variant occurs.

This morning on CNBC, former FDA Commissioner Scott Gottlieb reminded viewers of the key aspect of this disease. To paraphrase him loosely, cases can drop in the spring and summer, but the risk still exists for another wave to surge in the fall or winter. He is right. We all know this from sad experience.

We also know what we must do to be ready. We know a lot more now what to do to be ready than we knew a year ago. If we want to keep our schools open, if we want to keep life as close to normal as possible, if we want to be ready for the possibilities of future variants, Congress must provide the resources needed before a new variant arrives. That is the surest way to minimize cases, hospitalizations, and deaths in the future.

Let me repeat. To keep schools open, to keep life as normal as it can be, we need additional COVID investments now, not after a possible new variant arrives.

Remember, by now, all public health funding provided by the American Rescue Plan has run out. If Congress waits until a new variant arises to pass new funding, it will be too late.

And we are happy to make clear with our Republican colleagues about how this money is dedicated. The White House has already provided an explanation about how COVID money has been spent over time. Some Republicans may think it should have been spent differently, but the point is that

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. LEAHY).

#### PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Eternal God, we have enemies. Many strive to stop the march of freedom. Use our lawmakers to accomplish Your will on Earth. Give them the wisdom to trust Your precepts and depend upon Your guidance. Lord, judge our desires and thoughts, as You strengthen us with Your constant love. Thank You for the way You have helped us throughout our history. Spare us from the fate of those who do evil and sustain us with Your prevailing mercies. Guard those who place their hope in You and keep them safe, enabling them to tell of Your wonderful deeds to future generations.

We pray in Your great Name. Amen.

#### PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The President pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

#### RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

#### CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Morning business is closed.

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



Printed on recycled paper.

S961